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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 001698

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [CM](#) [FR](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: CHINA ARMS EMBARGO: FRENCH POSITIONS UNCHANGED

REF: STATE 044309

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Josiah Rosenblatt, reason 1  
.4 b/d

[11.](#) (C) As per reftel instructions, we raised with MFA DAS-level Director for East Asia Marc Abensour the upcoming visit to Europe of the Chinese Foreign Minister Li and reiterated the U.S. position against the lifting of the EU arms embargo, as well as our concerns on human rights, and the need for China to exercise restraint in the cross-strait relations. In response to our questions, Abensour said that the issue of public statements on the arms embargo during Li's visit is still under discussion. The EU can be expected to raise human rights and regional issues, he added.

[12.](#) (U) Abensour also referred us to the MFA's spokesperson's office for the MFA's March 14 response to a journalist's question on whether "China's vote on the anti-secession law would not lead the Government of France and the EU to reconsider its position towards the arms embargo." The spokesperson's answer, informally translated below, states:

"I do not see the link between the two points of your question. On the embargo and the sale of weapons, our position is well known and the aim remains the same as was enunciated by the European Council on 16-17 December, 2004. With respect to the law just adopted by the Chinese Popular National Assembly, there is an ongoing dialog among the Europeans."

[13.](#) (C) Separately, in an unrelated discussion on Asia with the MFA's policy planning expert on Asian Affairs (protect), he ventured that subsequent to the President's and the Secretary's successful visits to Europe, EU members may have

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misunderstood the ongoing importance that the United States placed on maintaining the embargo. This erroneous impression also applies to the EU's relations with Japan, he added. The Japanese are now lobbying hard across Europe making their opposition to the embargo more clearly known.  
Leach